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Afghan Agricultural Research and Extension Development Program (AGRED)



Monthly Report

August 2013

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Afghan Agricultural Research & Extension Development Program (AGRED)

Contract Award	AID-306-C-12-00006
Contract Recipient	Roots of Peace
Period of Contract	July 14, 2012 – July 13, 2017
Amount of Contract	\$23,638,611
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AGRED worked towards its overall goals of enabling the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and its directorates to manage donor funds and address gaps in its services. Trainings, workshops, and meetings were held throughout Afghanistan at farms, district and provincial offices of DAILs, and at MAIL in an effort to further achieve these goals.

Research and Extension units of the AGRED program did continue drafting and implementing the mini projects. During the month of August 7 proposals drafted which were sent to MAIL for review and endorsement.

Women Extension Department held coordination meetings with AAEP to ensure that the two programs have a working symbiotic relationship. During these meetings, they discussed the need to conduct monthly meetings for women in agriculture (WIA) working groups and the need for WIA working groups at the provincial level. They also discussed the ongoing difficulty involved with accessing women agricultural beneficiaries in Afghanistan. They also held workshops that focused on spreading new technologies and knowledge to DAIL women extension agents, which are elaborated in details in training section of this report.

Monitoring and Evaluation: MAIL's staff was oriented by AGRED M&E Coordinator on the on-budget implementation plan, role and responsibilities of the partners, AGRED funding mechanism, and key terms associated with On-Budget such as goals, performance benchmarks, required actions and timeline from MAIL, verification methods by USAID, and identification of needed support in achievement of the benchmarks. The MAIL AGRED's committees will review the implementation plan and set timelines for each of the performance benchmarks. They will also work on the required budget for achieving these benchmarks.

The AGRED communications team has continued to work on establishing best practices in obtaining the proper data from the field for reporting purposes. AGRED has also initiated the recruiting process for hiring an expatriate Communications Specialist who will not only lead programmatic reporting and overall strategy, but also facilitate capacity building of MAIL and DAILs communications staff for the on-budget portion of the program. More details are provided below in communication section of this report.

Training sessions were held for farmers via DAIL staff, and DAIL staff with a focus on nursery establishment, Mung bean research, saffron cultivation and poultry farm management. These workshops focused on building agricultural capacity of the DAILs to carry out all necessary research and extension functions.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN SEPTEMBER

RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- Draft and finalizing Mini Project Proposals for AGRED Program.
- Implementation and supervision of approved Mini Projects.
- Meetings with MAIL agriculture implementing partners at central and provincial levels.
- Meeting with MAIL research and extension departments at central and provincial levels.
- Conduct and participate coordination meetings

Implementation of approved mini Projects:

Grape vineyard mini project at Kabul DAIL, BBF:

On August 20 the Kabul, RRC, REC and PEC conducted a field visit to the vineyard demo plot based in the Agriculture Mechanization Department at Badam Bagh Farm. Now the vines are ready for trellising and the team under the leadership of the DAILs staff is working to make sure how many trellises polls are required for the purpose. Once the calculation is done, the polls will be planted in to the plot.

Under the leader ship of DAIL and technical and financial support of AGRED, Trellising for the demo plot at the Kabul DAIL mechanization department will be implemented.

Rice cultivation:

DAIL and AGRED staff supervised 18 improved rice variety demo plots in 6 villages of Narang district, 6 villages of Qargae district and 6 villages of Kama district. During these visits the DAIL staff advised the rice demo plot owners to use the second dose of urea fertilizer as per the project approved work plan, remove weeds from the plots, and to make sure the plots

have proper irrigation. Agro-tools that will be used to control weeds were distributed to target areas.

As a result of the visit, the farmers were informed of the implementation schedule and now have access to agro-tools for proper weeding of the plots. The farmers also gained knowledge that mechanical control is better than chemical control of weeds to make sure environmental mitigation standards are met.

Maize cultivation of east region:

On Aug 1st the Nangarhar irrigation canal was damaged and destroyed by heavy floodings. As a result there was insufficient water in the irrigation canals. The 6 maize cultivation demo plots in Sorkhroad district were not irrigated for 21 days. Sorkhroad district extension worker reported the situation to the director and AGRED main office that four out of the six plots were completely destroyed due to the shortage of irrigation. The DAIL shared the information with the provincial authorities for irrigation so that they repaired the canals within 20 days after the flood. As a result of this, the plots were irrigated after 21 days. As the plots were almost destroyed, but still the AGRED team and the DAIL extension workers are working on the plots and find ways to recover the destructions if possible.

Red clover demonstration plots in Paktyia province:

MAIL Plan and Policy department endorsed the Clover Mini Project proposal on August 21 for Gardiz and Ahmadabad districts of Paktyia province. As per the responsibilities of DAIL-extension department identified in the approved proposal, 6 demo plots were selected (three demo plots in Karmashi, Shakar-Khail, and Kochi-Khail villages of Gardiz district and 3 demo plots in Khowja-Khail, Asak-Khail, and Tarda-Khail villages of Ahmadabad district). Baseline and technical surveys of these plots were completed, and agreements with the 6 demo plot owners in respective districts were signed.

Maize cultivation in Kandahar Region:

As per weekly supervisory visits during this reporting period, it was found that 12 maize cultivation demo plots, 6 in Kandahar and 6 in Helmand, had good vegetative growth for the flowering stage and irrigation was done based on schedule. During these visits it was observed that three of the demo plots in Kandahar were in need of heavy weeding. The PEC and districts extension managers educated the maize demo plot owners on how to control different types of weeds. They also explained the advantages and disadvantages of weed control, its' effect on maize production, and also gave advices on timely irrigation. It was

found that stem borer insects in the maize fields in Kandahar and Helmand provinces damaged a few plants. AGRED team under the leadership of DAIL staff in Kandahar and Helmand provided advices on applying mechanical control approaches for the problem.

As a result of this visit It was found that the maize plants had good vegetative growth, and the demo plot owners received technical advice from the DAIL-district extension manager with technical assistance from AGRED staff on how control the Stem Borer insects.

Mung bean cultivation in Urozgan:

Urozgan Extension's Mung Bean mini project proposal which was approved by MAIL-DG of extension and the implementation was already started during the past months.

As per supervisory weekly field visit plan, the Urozgan PEC of AGRED visited the six Mung Bean demo plots in the Derahwood district of the province. During these supervisory visits, the PEC and extension manger of Derahwood district recommended irrigation and weed control as the result of which they did not observe any signs of pests or disease the most recent field visit.

Based on discussion held in between the AGRED PEC, Extension Manager of Derahwood and the selected farmers, it was found out that the farmers are eager to follow this new technology in the coming years as well.

Saffron cultivation plots in Ghazni Province:

The saffron mini project proposal was approved by MAIL-DG of extension on May 19, 2013. During this reporting period, 3 farmers were selected and signed contracts in three districts: Karmashi, Shakar-Khail and Kochi-Khail.

During the month of August the PEC of Ghazni along with DAIL – representative purchased the fertilizers (60 kg DAP and 60 kg Urea and 12MT animal manure) from the input supplier. The Ghazni province PEC and DAIL distributed these fertilizers to the three saffron demo plot owners in the targeted areas. The cultivation of the saffron corm will be implemented in the next reporting period.

Melon flies control and its management Research Project

Melon fly control research project which was designed as per the request of DAIL-research department of Kunduz province. This need was farmer driven of the area. After the approval of the MAIL- research directorate, the Kunduz- DAIL- research department

implemented the melon fly control project on three jiribs of land on the Kunduz Research Farm. The three jiribs of land was divided into 9 plots, three plots for each of the three methods of treatments listed below.

1. Bagging of the fruits.
2. Chemical control.
3. Control (no treatment)

The melon fly control research project was successfully completed by the DAIL- research department with the technical and financial support from AGRED. The knowledge gained by the research project was communicated to the DAIL research, extension and other departments' staff through trainings, workshops and field days. The final report is under draft. The finalized report will be shared once completed.

Cultivation of 11 new improved commercial grape varieties:

during the reporting period; every Wednesday, the RRC supervised the Badam Bagh Farm's (BBF) cultivation of 11 new improved commercial grape varieties. The RRC collected data regarding irrigation, disease, insect attacks and environmental factors affecting the commercial grape orchards. On August 19th RRC had a meeting with BBF General Manager and the MAIL- research officer to discuss the BBF commercial grape trellis system. Based on the discussion with the MAIL research officer, it was found that 310 trellis poles are required. The team will start planting the trellises in the next reporting period.

Mung Bean (NM94) cultivation and compare its yield production with local variety of shin mash in Kandahar Province:

The Mung Bean research mini project proposal was endorsed by MAIL- research director on June 26, 2013 for Kandahar DAIL- research department. The Mung Bean Research project started its implementation in the month of July at Kohkaharan research center.

The KDR-DAIL research manager and staff accompanied by AGRED regional team made supervisory trips to the research center twice a week during August. The team provided advice to the research farm plot protection workers on proper weeding and irrigation techniques as well as pest and disease treatments.

The DAIL- research staff with the technical support from AGRED collected data on the different vegetative growth stages from seed germination to flowering state and to pod stage. The research staff showed their proficiency in data collection by properly filling out

the specific data forms and with the information they had collected from the Mung Bean research project. The collected data will be processed and shared in the upcoming monthly report.

Women field day on Rice Cultivation:

A field day was held on improved rice variety cultivation for women on August 25, 2013 at the rice demo plot in Kama district of Nangarhar province. The district extension manager was in charge of the field day, while receiving technical and financial support from the AGRED staff. 23 women from nine different villages, Mast Ali, Merzaee, Sahibzadgan, BarKaly, Chakian, Koza Qala, Arbaban, Qala-e-Akhund, and Bela participated in the field day. The women gender coordinator for Nangarhar region went over the advantages to the new improved rice varieties and cultivation techniques. The field day resulted in delivering knowledge on new and improved rice variety and the participants were requested to deliver the gained knowledge to other women in their villages.

Prepare EMMP checklist for mini projects:

USAID has required AGRED projects have a checklist for environment screening and environment mitigation measures. The AGRED central team in Kabul completed an MM/SC checklist for 6 approved projects: Herat Mung Bean, Kandahar Research Mung Bean, Helmand and Kandahar Maize, Herat wheat and mung bean, and Kunduz Melon fly control, and submitted these checklists to the respective department of AGRED.

RRC and REC completed USAID requirement for MM/SC of approved projects to comply with EMMP requirements.

Draft mini project proposals and MAIL work plan for on budget:

During this reporting period, RRCs, RECs and PECs drafted with the central AGRED team drafted 7 mini proposals (Paktya Green House, Samangan Green House, Sar-i-Pul Green House, Wheat Demonstration Plots in Samangan, Faryab and Takhar; and Improving Communication Mini Project for Logar provinces). These proposals were sent to be reviewed by upper management of AGRED and MAIL/DAIL. Once reviewed and approved, implementation will be started per work plan of each project.

Meetings:

Meeting with USAID, PRT and ADT representatives:

A meeting was held on Aug 6, 2013 with Mr. Maurice Ogutu, the Agriculture Advisor of USAID in the North. The Program Officer and Agriculture Advisor went over the other USAID funded programs in northern Afghanistan: IDEA New, IWMP and AGRED are all programs currently in progress in the north, and RADP North which will start its implementation soon. Mr. Ogutu advised the AGRED team to keep in close coordination with the other USAID implementing partners so that they can not only be of assistance to each other, but also prevent any overlap of activities. They also discussed the mini projects that are currently being funded through the AGRED off-budget portion of the program.

On August 21st, Herat AGRED team met USAID representatives. The AGRED team went over the on going activities in the Herat region and described their processes how to stay in close coordination and cooperation with the DAIL staff.

Meeting with DAIL directors:

AGRED RCs and PECs held bi-weekly and monthly coordination meetings with DAIL directors and agriculture services affairs managers at both the regional and provincial levels. This was done in an effort to attain better coordination with and involvement of the DAILs' staff. The meetings focused primarily on drafted and approved mini project proposals. There were some fruitful ideas suggested and drafted but as the proposals' financial range being max \$10,000, some of the ideas can not fall under this schedule. The DAIL directors expressed their desire to move away from the short term, smaller off-budget trainings towards larger on-budget projects such as construction and rehabilitation of centers.

Meeting with extension and research department:

As per the AGRED work plan, the Balkh RECs RRCs and PECs of regional and provincial levels met with the Balkh DAIL extension, research , and animal science manager and the service affairs general manager on August 3rd . The meeting was held at the office of General Manager for Agricultural Services Affairs. An orientation on approved mini project proposal and how the team will work together during the projects implementation was delivered by AGRED regional team. They also discussed each approved mini project implementation methodology and dividend of responsibilities between AGRED and the DAIL staff. Balkh extension manager requested that AGRED obtain an official letter from MAIL depicting the contract between MAIL and AGRED with concerns to the projects' implementation.

Coordination meeting with the Dean of the Paktya and Helmand Agriculture faculties:

The Paktya AGRED staff held a coordination meeting with Professor Mohammad Dawood Ahmad Zai, Dean of Agriculture faculty and other faculties' responsible and professors on Aug 21, 2013. The purpose of the meeting was to update the participants on AGRED program activities and progress in Paktya and Helmand provinces. AGRED team also provided detailed info on training for Paktya and Helmand. AGRED team during the meetings received full support for the training program from the Dean of the faculty. On August 22nd, the PEC of Helmand held a meeting with Helmand agriculture lecturer Mr. Baryalai and other agriculture faculty professors. They discussed Saffron training as it was requested by Helmand DAIL extension department officially. Mr. Baryalai offered his full support in any technical part of the training on Saffron that the DAIL may need.

Having technical support for academics, the AGRED staff will be able to involve agriculture faculty Professors and students in the implementation of each project resulting in more capacity building and sharing of any new knowledge.

Meeting with Paktya Nursery grower Association (NGA):

On Aug 3rd, a meeting was held with Paktya Nursery Growers Association, GPFA, Paktya DAIL senior managers for agriculture affairs and extension staff. The Paktya DAIL extension department discussed their concerns with the Nursery Bud project proposal. The DAIL director requested AGRED Paktya team to technically support the DAIL extension staff in drafting a proposal for Bud Distribution. This proposal was planned by DAIL to be submitted to AAEP by extension staff of Paktya DAIL.

The meetings provided Paktya DAIL staff and various nursery growers a chance to be aware of the AGRED program and how to best utilize the services offered by AGRED with the better coordination and cooperation in between DAIL and AGRED regional team in Paktya. Farmers took the chance and shared some of their farming related problems with the DAIL and AGRED team. The DAIL and AGRED provided required advices to the farmers.

Agriculture Technical Working Group (ATWG) and PDC meetings:

Agricultural directorates initiated the ATWG meetings so that national and international NGOs, UN agencies and other private sectors involved in agriculture projects would have the opportunity to share project information and collaborate on solving technical issues at the provincial level. The AGRED team participated in such meetings in Laghman, Logar, Kabul, Bamyan, Kunar, Kunduz, Urozgan, Saripul, Samangan, Bamyan, Faryab, Jowzjan and Kandahar provinces. The main topics discussed during the meetings were farmer trainings, NGO activities & Progress and the upcoming plans of the NGOs. AGRED RRC and REC presented their ongoing project activities and progress achieved so far.

At a result of these meetings, agricultural sectorial members, USAID and PRT representatives received updates concerning ongoing project activities from AGRED and the other NGOs working in the field.

DAIL weekly Administrative meeting :

Kandahar AGRED representatives (REC and RRC) participated in an administrative meeting at the DAIL meeting hall on Aug 24th. The participants were members from the DAIL departments such as extension, research, admin, finance, planning and policies cooperative, IT, live stock extension, plant protection, and human resources, and members from CBCMP and AGRED. The main focus of the meeting was the emphasis of the DAIL director on delivering required activities reports and presenting the activities and achievements in weekly basis to DAIL directorate.

He explained that MAIL needs to be updated on the projects on a weekly basis to ensure that they are going according to the project's plan and proposed timeline. If the objectives and implementation does not meet the plan, then MAIL will cut off fund for those projects with low performance.

PDC meeting:

Logar PEC participated in a PDC meeting on Aug 20. The purpose of the participation was to inform himself of the ongoing projects being implementing by NGOs and UNs agencies in Logar. It was known that Tthe Indian government representative announced \$500,000 dollar grant to build a micro-hydro power station in the Azra district of Logar. Though it is not related directly to Agriculture, but having Hydropower station in Logar province for sure indirectly improves the agriculture of area. The PEC in Logar will consider this when a proposal needs to be drafted if required.

Meeting with Kunduz Provincial Council:

Aug 20th, a brief meeting was held with USAID funded projects and the Provincial Assembly in Kunduz. The AGRED staff introduced the project, policies and ongoing activities. The PA of Kunduz presented its great interest in the AGRED project expressing their full support. The AS asked AGRED to coordinate closely with them in implementation of the project in the province.

As a result of the meeting, the provincial authorities were briefed on AGREDs ongoing activities and AGRED staff got familiar with the provincial council in Kunduz. Kunduz team will improve the coordination and cooperation with the Provincial Council for any support may be required in the implementation of projects.

Meeting with NGOs:

A coordination meeting was conducted with the implementing partners of USAID Office of Agriculture on 13th August in Balkh province. The purpose of this meeting was to improve coordination with NGOs, to avoid duplication of activities and to share updates on the progress and activities of the program.

Field visit from Mung Bean Research Project in Kandahar

The Kandahar AGRED team, REC, female REC and PEC, along with DAIL- general extension manager conducted a field visit to supervise the maize extension and mung bean research projects in Kandahar. They went to the Aka and Shurandam village demo plots of Daman District. DAIL extension manager gave technical advice to the farmers about irrigation, fertilizer application and weed control.

As a result of the visit, Kandahar demo plots received valuable technical advises on irrigation, fertilizer application and weed control. AGRED team provided technical support to the DAIL extension manager so his capacity to give advice as well as to survey a demo plot is strengthened leading to the overall goal of building the capacity of DAIL staff.

CHALLENGES

1. Security Issues in some of the areas raised recently for example in Logar province.

WOMEN EXTENSION PROGRAM

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- 1- Introduction of Ag. Faculty students to AAEP extension education enters.
- 2- Coordination and technical meetings among MAIL/DAILs Extension, Research, Gender and Home Economy departments
- 3- Establishment of Women in Agriculture Working Groups at provincial level
- 4- Coordination meetings with AAEP on Women in Agriculture Working group activities.
- 5- Agriculture Sectorial Group (ASG) meetings (or ATWG meetings at regional level)
- 6- Conduct trainings for DAILs women extension workers
- 7- Working with DAILs Home economy and DoWAs to identify women participants for the upcoming trainings and collect the qualified female CVs for the potential positions for AGRED project
- 8- Coordination with USAID OAG IP Gender working group to host the next Implementing Partners Gender Working Group (IPGWG) meeting by ROP

Introduction of Ag. Faculty students to AAEP extension education enters

This activity was planned for the month of August but due to not having signed MOU in between MAIL and Ministry of Higher Education was postponed for the next months after the signed MOU is in place.

Coordination and technical meetings with MAIL/DAILs Extension/Research, Gender and Home Economy departments

During the month of August coordination meetings were held with MAIL and DAILs Extension, Research, Gender and Home Economy directorates to;

- Improve networking among MAIL related departments to incorporate gender into all extension/research program and activities

- Strengthen communication between MAIL gender unit and USAID Agriculture Implementing partners on topics of gender mainstreaming in agriculture value chains.
- Identify opportunities within MAIL and DAILs to increase the capacity of women employees
- Build capacity of women farmer at regional, provincial, district and village levels
- How to expend extension and research projects for women farmer

As results of these meetings the different departments at mail as Research, Extension and Gender; and the Kabul DAIL depts. got the membership of Women in Agriculture Working Group at MAIL level. Also, it was decided to conduct the next IPGWG meeting at ROP compound sponsored by AGRED. To have more coordination, it was also decided to have MAIL concerned staff at this meeting. The meeting was scheduled for the month of October 2013.

Establishment of Women in Agriculture Working Groups at provincial level

During the month of August, Women in agriculture working group was established in Faryab province, North Region. AGRED female coordinator worked and involved DAIL relevant departments, Academics, Ag partners, MoWA for a month to establish the Women in Agriculture Working Groups in Faryab province. This working group includes representatives from DAIL departments (Extension, Research, Home Economy and Gender); Academics including Ag Institute/Ag Professional School, Private Sectors, DAIL Ag partners, Farmer Associations/Cooperatives will meet once/twice a month to address agriculture issues on extension and research for women in Faryab province.

The members for these working groups are identified. The SOW for these working groups are drafted and provided to USAID OAG for approval. Once approved, the meetings will be held. Currently these members are contacted informally to have their ideas and concerns on female farmers' activities in Agriculture.

Coordination meeting with AAEP on Women in Agriculture Working Groups Activities

During the month of August coordination meeting was held with AAEP DCOP Ms. Sophia to avoid duplication of activities and to share the AGRED and AAEP extension programs and activities for women farmers with each other. The main topics, which have been discussed;

- Monthly meetings for women in agriculture working groups,
- Establishment of WIA working groups at provincial level,
- Difficulty of accessing women extension workers in Kabul region and some solutions,
- Membership criteria for working groups,

- Conduct trainings on how to write work plan, mini projects and reports
- Conducting Joint workshops/Conferences and transferring new technologies and knowledge to DAIL women extension agents at DAIL level.
- Expanding AAEP educational extension agriculture for Agriculture faculty students

Agriculture Sectorial Groups (ASG) meetings

During the reporting period, AGRED female RECs of Kandahar, Kunduz, Balkh, Paktia, Nanagarhar and Herat participated in the ASG meetings. Meetings were held in concerned DAILs and participated by Gov respective departments , directors (DAIL , economic, PRRD, DARSA ,Labor affairs and disable and education) , UN agencies (UNODC and UNAMA), national and international NGOs (SIKA, CHA, CHAMP, PHDP, GIZ , ACTED, Mercy Corps, ASPR, JIKA,SRO, CBCMP , AGRED and other NGOs) representatives and KPRT representative. AGRED female RECs updated participants on AGRED women program activates including; establishment of women in agriculture working group, engendering the newly drafted mini projects proposals , coordination meetings with DAILs directorate at provincial level and coordination meetings with Ag faculties, institutes and professional schools.

Working with DAILs Home Economy and DoWAs to identify women to participate in the upcoming trainings

During the month of August, AGRED Female Regional Coordinator for Paktya region met with Director of Women Affairs in Paktia province. AGRED Female coordinator briefed the Women Affairs Directorate on AGRED programs and activities in the province for women farmers through building capacity of the DAIL staff (Extension and Research).

The provincial women director thanked the team for the briefing and AGRED's efforts for women farmers in Paktya. She mentioned that DoWA is ready to help and provide any kind of support to the AGRED program in the concerned area.

Meetings with USAID OAG IP Gender working group for the next meeting

The purpose of establishment of USAID OAG IP Gender working group is to share information, and strengthen coordination among USAID implementing partners and the USAID/OAG on issues regarding gender equity and empowerment of women in agriculture value chains and natural resource management.

CHALLENGES

- Cultural restrictions and security concerns have prevented the qualified female to work at DAIL offices in the provinces particularly in Paktia, Kandahar and Logar
- Security problems
- MAIL official letter has not been yet sent to DAILs to introduce AGRED program at regional and provincial level
- Participation of DAILs staff in the training/workshop and working on mini projects without any payment will be a challenge.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- Field level monitoring visits
- EMP monitoring and reporting
- Follow-up visits
- Summary Reports of the field visits.
- Update data for PMP and Afghan Info database

On August 3rd, 2013. MAIL staff were oriented by AGRED M&E Coordinator on the on-budget implementation plan, role and responsibilities of the partners, AGRED funding mechanism, and key terms associated with On-Budget such as goals, performance benchmarks, required actions and timeline from MAIL, verification methods by USAID, and identification of needed support in achievement of the benchmarks. The MAIL and AGRED committees will review, plan and set timelines for each of the performance benchmarks. They will also work on the required budget for achieving these benchmarks.

Field monitoring visits:

During the reporting month, the AGRED M&E conducted five monitoring visits (Three monitoring visits in Kunduz province and two monitoring visit in Kandahar province). The purpose of the monitoring visits was to monitor the process and outcomes of the mini-projects and AGRED led trainings. Findings of the visits (Attached as Annex A) were shared at the time with the relevant staff members. Follow up visits will be conducted to assess the extent to which corrective actions were taken by the staff.

Field monitoring database:

A process for monitoring and updating the field monitoring database was put in place and will form the function of ensuring all findings of the field level monitoring and follow-up visits are recorded and uploaded onto the database.

Update Data (PMP/Afghan Info)

Data was collected and compiled for USAID Afghan Info database with regards to progress toward PMP indicators.

COMMUNICATION

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- Data collection and drafting of July progress report
- During the month of August the AGREED Communication team focused on improving reporting to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed of program activities
- Finalize and submit all Afghanistan (Kabul and Provinces) Media Agencies contact list.
- Drafting a Communications Strategy and AGREED
- fact Sheet.

The communications department worked on establishing best practices for getting the proper information and data from the field for AGREED reports. For this purpose, communication team for AGREED developed a standard tool for data collection from field offices. This standard format will help the field staff to provide the data what is required and help the communication team to have data from all the field offices in same format which for sure will ease the consolidation of the data. Meanwhile, the communication team developed a timeline to monthly data collection based on which the field staff provided data to the communication team. This timeline will help the communication team for AGREED to submit the monthly reports to USAID in timely manner.

During the reporting period, the communication team developed a list of all media agencies available in Afghanistan. These media agencies will be utilized by AGREED for public awareness and to deliver agricultural messages to the distant communities.

The AGREED Communication team focused on improving reporting to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed of program activities. For the on-budget portion of the

program, the team worked closely with MAIL communications department to discuss the communication strategic goal of the MAIL implementation plan. The draft communication plan was shared with MAIL communications. Comments were incorporated and the revised draft was shared with MAIL for final review. Once all strategic goals are reviewed, the strategy will be submitted to USAID for review.

During the month of August, the communication team initiated work to draft a communications strategy for AGRED program. The outlines for the strategy were developed and shared with DCOP Operation and AGRED home off back at USA for review. The comments received and incorporated. Data will be put in the outlines and a zero draft strategy for communication will be produced during the next reporting period.

TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

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- ROP-AGRED staff capacity building training
- New potato cultivation method training course in Bamyan (Postponed for the next months)
- Poultry Farming management training course in Maidan Wardak Province. (added based on DAIL request)
- Conduct training course about poultry farm management by AGRED Training Coordinator in Kunduz province.(added per request of DAIL staff)
- Mung bean workshop by AGRED REC in Herat Province.
- Conduct training course about poultry farm management through AGRED Training Coordinator in Baghlan province

Below table shows the trainings conducted in August for DAILs staff:

NO	Location	Training Title	Male Participants	Female Participants	Total	From	To
1	Maidan Wardak	Poultry Farm Management	10	0	10	17 Aug	20 Aug
2	Kunduz	Poultry Farm	16	12	28	24 Aug	26 Aug

		Management					
3	Herat	Mung Bean	16	5	21	25 Aug	26 Aug
4	Baghlan	Poultry Farm Management	14	8	22	27 Aug	29 Aug
5	Zabul	PH Meter	2	0	2	18 Aug	18 Aug
6	Zabul	Grafting in Nursery	1	0	1	25 Aug	25 Aug
	Total		59	25	84		

Capacity building sessions for AGRED staff:

The first year for AGRED program is passed and AGRED operation team as per ROP Policy initiated to conduct the Annual Performance Appraisal of its staff in the center and field. For this purpose, an Annual Evaluation Form was developed by Operation, which should be used by supervisors while evaluating their staff. For this purpose, a workshop was facilitated and conducted by DCOP Operation. This workshop was participated by RRCs, RECs, and Women RECs on 13th and 14th of August at AGRED conference Hall in Kabul

DAIL Staff capacity building sessions

AGRED has been using Mung Bean cultivation and agro-techniques trainings as a tool to enhance the capacity of DAIL staff.. A two days workshop on Mung Bean cultivation and agro-techniques was held at the plant production department of the Herat DAIL on August 25th and 26th. 21 DAIL staff attended: 10 from the extension department, 3 from the home economics department, 3 from the cereal crop working group, 3 from the women working group, and 2 from cooperatives. Among these 21 participants 5 were female staff. AGRED always put an effort to engender its activities in the targeted provinces though there are some restrictions and limitations based on the security problems and / or no female staff at DAILs level.

The workshop was resulted in delivering required knowledge to the DAIL staff on Mung Bean Cultivation and Agri-Techniques. The DAIL staff were enabled to deliver the same knowledge to the farmers of the province.

Conduct of training of using a PH meter:

The PEC – Zabul on 18th August trained two DAIL extension staff on how to use a PH meter when analyzing the PH level of irrigation water and soil. This was done to meet the project benchmark objectives of enhancing the DAIL staff capacity. Now that the extension staff properly understands the use of a PH meter and the PH scale they will share this knowledge with the farmers of their region and all will have healthier crops due to proper PH of and irrigation water and soil.

Grafting training in nursery:

The Zabul PEC conducted an Apricot nursery grafting training on August 25. This training was done to improve and enhance the capacity of DAIL extension officer with regards to nursery grafting. There was one theoretical training and one practical training conducted for the Zabul Extension officer.

During the practical session they did a hands-on lesson on the apricot ‘T-budding’ grafting method that is commonly used in Zabul province.

As a result, the DAIL- extension officer gained valuable knowledge on grafting and budding of apricots and will share this knowledge with nursery growers in targeted areas.

Poultry farm management training:

Poultry Farm Management training was held on Aug 17, 2013 at the DAIL meeting hall in Maidan Wardak Province. There were 10 participants in total, four from extension and six from the livestock department. The Poultry Farm Management training was also conducted by AGRED in Kunduz province on August 24th, 25th, and 26th. There were 28 participants from DAIL staff in this workshop: 12 women and 16 men (from livestock, extension, cooperative, women cooperatives home economics units and university students). AGRED Training Coordinator who is a live stock and poultry specialist, delivered the training. The following topics were delivered to the participants. Health and common diseases of broiler

- Definition of various poultry diseases and host animals
- Etiology of diseases, transmission of and common signs of disease
- Clinical signs and postmortem signs
- Diagnosis of disease

- Precaution measures such as vaccines to control poultry diseases.

Training session on Mung Bean for DAILs staff in Herat

This workshop was held in plant production department of DAIL in Herat province for two days on August 25 and 26 /013, 21 .Participants were from (Extension and Home Economy departments, Cereal crop group and Women working group). During training many issues has been discussed such as (production of Bung Bean in Afghanistan, Biological properties, a viable varieties in Afghanistan, crop rotation, Application of fertilizer, land preparation, seed selection, methods of cultivation, irrigation, weeding, harvesting & storage , economic importance and food value of mungbean).

Training course on Poultry Farm Management in Kunduz:

On August, 24 a training program was conducted on poultry farm management in Kunduz province. There were 28 participants. The program was delivered by AGRED Training Coordinator.

The training focused on poultry husbandry, and explained the differences between traditional methods, improved traditional methods and modern or industrial poultry methods, common broiler disease and their etiology, symptomology, and preventive measures. The Training Coordinator also gave a presentation on metabolic diseases and how to manage them on a poultry farm. The TC provided information regarding sanitation, cleaning and disinfection and caging of baby chicks as preventative measures.

Poultry Farm Management Training in Baghlan

Poultry Farm management training was held on 27th-29th 2013 in the Baghlan province. There were 22 participants in total (14 male and 8 female) AGRED training coordinator explained the following topics on poultry farm management:

- Health and common diseases of broiler
- Definition of various poultry diseases and host animals
- Etiology of diseases, transmission of and common signs of disease
- Clinical signs and postmortem signs
- Diagnosis of disease
- Precaution measures such as vaccines to control poultry diseases.

As a result, the DAIL staff built significant capacity related to poultry farm management and is now better equipped to face all aspects of the business especially in regards to poultry diseases.

ACTIVITIES FOR SEPTEMBER 2013

RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR SEPTEMBER 2013

- Writing of mini proposal for AGRED project
- Meeting and working with research and extension departments
- Participation in the AWTG meeting
- Participation in the DAIL- administrative meeting
- Implementation of improved mini fund proposals projects.
- Supervision of demonstration plots
- Supervision from implemented projects in targeted areas
- Conduct capacity building training workshop to DAIL- staff

WOMEN EXTENSION PROGRAM

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR SEPTEMBER 2013,

- Introduction of Ag faculty students to AAEP extension education classes
- Establishment of Women in Agriculture Working Groups at provincial level
- Cooperation in Implementation of the approved Mini projects proposals
- Coordination meetings with AAEP on women in agriculture activities
- Make sure that all the trainings conducted for DAIL staff are engendered.
- Participation in Agriculture Sectorial Group (ATWG) meetings.
- Coordination meetings with USAID OAG IP Gender team for the next meeting
- Meeting and working with research and extension departments on mini project proposals to make sure they are engendered.
- Establishment of Women in Agriculture Working Groups at provincial level

MONITORING & EVALUATION

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- Field level monitoring visits of the AGRED activities
- Environmental mitigation monitoring visits and reporting
- Follow up visits of the AGRED activities
- Field visit summary reports
- Updated Afghan info database and PMP indicators for 4th quarter.

COMMUNICATION

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR SEPTEMBER 2013,

- Collect data for and finalize the AGRED monthly reports for the month of August.
- Finalize and submit the AGRED September monthly report.
- Updating all Afghanistan provinces' media Agencies contact list.
- Updating Kabul Province Media contact list.
- Improve Communications Strategy draft
- Improve AGRED Fact Sheet draft
- Work on Communication Strategic Goal of MAIL implementation plan.

TRAINING & WORKSHOPS

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- Poultry Diseases course and production: Badakshan, Takhar Provinces
- Potato cultivation by new method Training course in Bamyan
- Initiate drafting of Training Plan for AGRED